

Message Text

SECRET

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21

ACTION SS-25

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R 180441Z NOV 75
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2554

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 1183

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IZ
SUBJ: ATTEMPTED MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY AND IRAQI FOREIGN
MINISTER HAMMADI

1. ON NOV. 12 I CALLED ON IBRAHIM AL-WALI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. THE CONVERSATION WAS GENERALLY FRIENDLY AND WALI CONVEYED THE IMPRESSION THAT HE PERSONALLY WAS WORKING HARD TO BRING ABOUT BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN HIS GOVERNMENT AND USG. HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER THE INCREASING COMMERCIAL LINKS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND IRAQ AND EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THESE LINKS WOULD INEVITABLY LEAD TO BETTER POLITICAL RELATIONS AS WELL.

2. WALI SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAVORABLE REPLY TO THE SECRETARY'S REQUEST FOR A MEETING AT THE UN WITH FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI AND HE WAS DISTURBED WHEN THE MEETING DID NOT TAKE PLACE. I REVIEWED WITH HIM OUR ATTEMPTS TO ARRANGE A MEETING IN WASHINGTON AND IN NEW YORK AND WALI SAID HE WAS SORRY HE HAD NOT BEEN IN NEW YORK AT THE TIME AS HE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE THE ARRANGEMENTS. WALI WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT HAMMADI HAD BEEN IN WASHINGTON ON A PRIVATE VISIT WHEN WE HAD PROPOSED HAMMADI COME TO THE STATE DEPT. WALI HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT THE SECRETARY HAD ASKED HAMMADI TO COME TO WASHINGTON FROM NEW YORK FOR THE VISIT. WALI ALSO MADE POINT THAT INITIATIVE FOR MEETING HAD COME FROM THE SECRETARY AND HAMMADI HAD NOTHING TO BRING UP. HAMMADI THEREFORE FELT THAT SECRETARY SHOULD CALL ON HIM RATHER THAN HE ON SECRETARY.

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3. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT APPROVAL FOR HAMMADI MEETING WITH SECRETARY WAS GIVEN BY BAGHDAD WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH HAMMADI. HIS EVASIVENESS IN N.Y. AND WASH. WAS PROBABLY A COMBINATION OF PIQUE AT NOT BEING CONSULTED BY HIS OWN GOVERNMENT, OVERSENSITIVITY TO PROTOCOL, AND FEAR THAT ANY CONTACT WITH SECRETARY MIGHT BE USED AGAINST HIM BY RIVALS OR ENEMIES AT HOME AT LATER DATE. HAMMADI NO DOUBT REMEMBERS NASR AL-HANI, THE LATE IRAQI AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, WHO WAS FOUND MURDERED IN A DITCH, PRESUMABLY BY BAAATH PARTY GUNMEN, SHORTLY AFTER HE RETURNED TO BAGHDAD AFTER THE BREAK IN RELATIONS IN 1967. FOREIGN MINISTER IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED BY BAGHDAD DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AS A CAUTIOUS AND RATHER TIMID TECHNICIAN WHO HAS RELATIVELY LITTLE INFLUENCE WITH THE RCC.

WILEY

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NNN

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